

Washington, D.C.

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After three long months in Washington, D.C. my internship has finally come to a close. However, the time that I spent there has had a profound effect on my life at home. During my time at the William Penn House, I spent 40 hours a week indulging in hospitality and programming. My duties on a hospitality shift included cleaning of the hostel, making and canceling reservations; I checked in multiple guests and groups while also acting as an interior designer for the house. This was my primary front desk position. Programming, on the other hand, had me out in the community installing garden boxes in the yards of people's homes. By promoting urban farming, we were able to get fresh fruits and vegetables into the food deserts surrounding mainstream D.C.

The values of the William Penn House follow the beliefs of Quakers in that there is that of God in everyone. By this philosophy, we come not to place judgment or ridicule beliefs but to have open hearts and ears, accepting those as they are and not as we see them to be. This in and of itself qualifies as radical hospitality that is the true mission of the hostel. During my time there this core belief became not only an employment specification but a way of life. This translated every Friday when we served breakfast to the homeless at a local church. We saw many schizophrenics, drug addicts, and rebels, only to provide them with a soul willing to listen with open arms. If I learned anything this summer, it is that sometimes the people who have the least can love the most.



This experience has affirmed that I made the correct decision in choosing Wilmington College for my undergraduate degree. I say this because by promoting hands-on learning, I was able to approach Capitol Hill head on and experience what this lifestyle is like firsthand. Without this adventure, I would be left with the false ideology that I cannot make a difference in the world. Going into my career that is a dangerous assumption to have. After all, I lived three blocks away from where same-sex marriage became legalized, I ran the national mall every evening, and I have met people of immense power on multiple occasions. If I as a college intern can experience those things in one summer, imagine what the world of politics will hold for me when it becomes my career.

Working for a hostel has nothing to do with my future profession; however, in politics you encounter quite a few people with which you do not agree. From this experience, I learned how to deal with those kinds of difficult people who always seem to be chasing problems. Working at the front desk in our hostel, I have encountered several visitors who were unhappy for one reason or another. Most of the time their problems were out of my hands, and there was nothing I could do to please them. After a while, I came to find that by placating their concerns, the client in turn felt better. Most of the time you have to act like a whipping post before you can move forward to resolve an issue. Being respectful and accepting of their criticism is a skill I never expected to develop, but one I am grateful I did.



This internship was not at all what I expected. Looking back, I am not quite sure what I thought I was going to be doing. However, now that I am at this journey's close, I am beyond proud of myself for the hard work I have done and the change I have implemented. The internship in total has rendered itself to be an eye-opening and enlightening experience. Working for the Penn House

has had such an impact on my life. I love all of the community service we did, from serving at D.C. Kitchen International, to going to the local church to serve breakfast to the homeless. The William Penn House fulfills its mission statement on more than one note, and I feel very blessed to have had the opportunity to work alongside them.

